

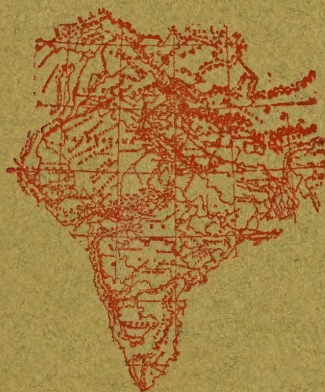
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India Pen=Pictures . .

by

Bishop Foss



WOMAN'S FOREIGN MISSIONARY SOCIETY,
METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH,
BOSTON, MASS.



INDIA PEN-PICTURES.

An Address

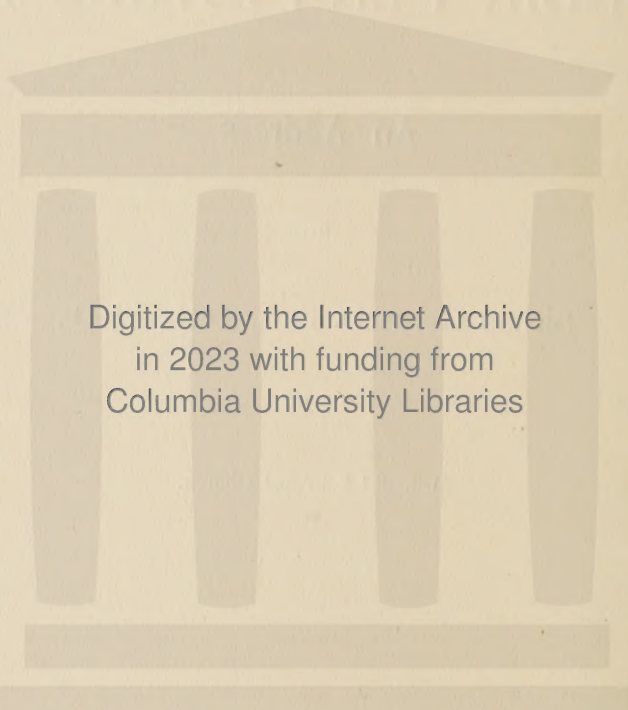
BY

Bishop Cyrus D. Foss, D.D., LL.D.,

OF THE

Methodist Episcopal Church.

WOMAN'S FOREIGN MISSIONARY SOCIETY,
METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH,
BOSTON, MASS.



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ADDRESS.

PERMIT me, before announcing the chief purpose of this address, a few observations of a general sort such as would occur to any tourist, relating to matters which must arouse the attention of every intelligent observer who travels widely in the East—matters confessedly not of the highest moment, but of very curious and often of greatly delighted interest to men who have the opportunities which I thus enjoyed.

In making the circuit of the earth I travelled 33,000 miles—21,000 of them by sea—sixty-six days on almost all the seas and oceans in the north temperate and northern part of the torrid zones, with no hurricanes, no storm at all until I had been forty days on many seas, then two or three days and nights a little exciting to a landsman, but nothing to a sailor, not an hour of fog, and not a minute of that grievous, central, physical disturbance which makes the sea such a terror to multitudes of my fellow-men.

PLAGUE AND FAMINE.

On reaching Bombay I was furnished at the outset with abundant knowledge concerning that great scourge which devastated that city and some other places in India in the winter of 1896-7, the bubonic plague. It is chiefly a winter disease; in the summer it almost disappears. When I was in Bombay in November and December, 1897, the death rate from the plague ranged from four to fourteen a day, touching no Europeans at all; in January and February it rapidly increased; and I received a letter from Bishop Thoburn in which he says, "Bombay, March 8, 1898: I find all well, but the plague has not abated in the least. The deaths yesterday were 193;

and the daily death rate has been in the neighborhood of 200 for two weeks past. Europeans still escape, for the most part." So that, although the efforts to stamp out the plague have been partially successful, there is deep apprehension and fear that it may spread to other great cities in India on the eastern coast, whose filthy condition certainly invites it. No words can well express the admiration which the British Government and the India department of it deserve for their heroic efforts, with unstinted use of money and of all available scientific skill, to limit and, if possible, to destroy this awful scourge; and the same may be said of the efforts to relieve the famine, which had pretty much ceased when I reached India in November, 1897. A great many deaths occurred during the winter as the indirect consequence of the famine, and the statements made by Mr. Julian Hawthorne in the *Cosmopolitan Magazine*, which were so severely criticised, according to the best information I could get in India, did not exaggerate the dreadful consequences of the famine.

BRITISH RULE IN INDIA.

I referred to the British Government. One of the marvels of history—one of the most striking series of events in it, in any generation and in any land—may be summed up in the phrase, "British Rule in India." How it came to pass that a nation having its chief seat of empire on a little island on the west coast of Europe should have been able to subjugate a territory as large as the United States east of the Mississippi River, and to bring almost all the native rulers under its authority; and since to hold disarmed a population of two hundred and eighty-seven million people, and give them the best government by far that they have ever had, and to do this with only eighty thousand British soldiers, and with British residents (men, women and children all put together) less than one hundred and ninety thousand,—surely this is one of the greatest marvels recorded in authentic history. It sounds like the wildest romance; but it is the solid and magnificent achievement of one of the great governing and colonizing nations of the globe, bone of our bone and flesh of our flesh; and I want to add this, in this time when I will not say we greatly need (for any other reason than a sympathetic reason) the friendship of the mother country—I want to say this, that, travelling around the globe, I have met with Englishmen

—a great many of them—of all ranks of society; several earls, more lords, officers of the army and navy and of the merchant marine, merchants and barristers, missionaries and their critics, clergymen and mechanics: I have talked with them or heard them talk; and I have not met a single Englishman, even in the freedom of the conversations on board vessels where we were together many days, which are sure to loosen men's tongues if anything can, who said in my hearing, at any time, any word concerning our country that was not a word of respect and friendship. And when, on board English ships, called to conduct religious services, I prayed in the same breath, more than once, for the Queen Empress of India, and for the President of the United States, the rustle of satisfaction and gladness amounted almost to applause; and I am sure you will all heartily join me in saying "God save the Queen" and "God bless Old England."

CURIOUS THINGS.

Among the curious things about which I am to speak to you briefly, in this introduction to the graver speech which is to come later, I cannot pass by the striking and very disgusting spectacles which I saw in Bombay, in the methods employed in disposing of the bodies of the dead, in the Burning Ghats and the Towers of Silence. Imagine, if you can anywhere outside the heathen world, a vast enclosure as large as one of the largest blocks in this city, surrounded by a stone wall fifteen feet in height, and within it every day fifteen, twenty or one hundred corpses burned to ashes on separate piles of wood, right in the heart of the city; so that as you drive along the fine boulevard most disgusting smoke and odors offend your senses. The Towers of Silence, used by the Parsees only, are great circular walls twenty-five feet in height and one hundred feet in diameter, with iron gratings near the bottom on which the bodies of the dead are laid; while hundreds of vultures hover around in expectation, pounce down upon them from their roost on the wall or from their flight in the sky, and in about ten minutes every particle of flesh is gone from the bones. From the windows of Bishop Thoburn's house I first made the acquaintance of the omnipresent—friends (shall I say?) of humanity in India (because of their service as scavengers)—the *crows*, which gather by the thousand in the most populous quarters of all the

larger cities of India—tens of thousands—with their perpetual “caw! caw!” so that you can scarcely hear another sound, morning and evening. They are not quite as big as our crows and wear a kind of light gray sash around their necks; they will come to the window ledge close by you, and leer at you and scold you and call you names till you get up and drive them away, and then come back in a few minutes and repeat the process until you really feel mean and wonder whether you are such a scoundrel. They snatch the bread and butter out of the hands of the children; they rob the cook going from the cook house to the dining room of the victuals on the plate; in many ways they are a perpetual annoyance. But not more so than the monkeys in some of the cities of northern India, which are more disgusting still, and are worse thieves, by far. Many a time a demure monkey, apparently asleep, only waits until some passer-by comes with food to his taste, carelessly carried. when, with a sudden stroke of his long hand, he will bring it all down upon the street, and twenty monkeys, which have been notified to be on hand, will at once grab it up and run away with it. Then there are the flying foxes, those enormous bats, of which I saw thousands flying over the parks in Lucknow and Cawnpore, weighing about one pound and a half each, with the head, shoulders and body of a fox, as perfect as you can imagine, and with wings that spread four feet from tip to tip—I measured some after they were dead.

I will tell you of a more pleasing sight, the “pigeon orchid” of Malaysia, an inch and a half in length, whiter than the whitest lily, with the perfect form of a white pigeon with its two wings spread and its tail raised. The remarkable fact is that myriads of these blooms, which grow wild, come out once every month in the year in the torrid zone, absolutely on the same day—every one of these millions—and the next day they fade. And now, what is still more surprising, in the islands near by the same beautiful flower blossoms monthly in the same way, every one on the island simultaneously, but on a different day from the blossoming day in Singapore.

No man can go to Rangoon, Burma, without being told that one of the greatest sights there is the working elephants. There are very great lumber interests in Rangoon. I went to one of the large sawmills where I saw nine working elephants, which

carried the logs to the saws and brought away the slabs, then brought away the timbers and piled them up. I saw two of them piling bridge timbers thirty-five feet long, from sixteen to twenty-two inches square, weighing from two to three tons each; making them into piles twelve feet high, that were never touched by any human hands; but these beasts, with intelligence superior to that of many of the human natives of the country, under the direction of drivers sitting on their necks, raised the great timbers and slipped them to their places as deftly as you can imagine.

HIDEOUS HINDUISM.

I must hasten on to lay before you facts far more vivid and impressive,—facts of ruin and of rescue;—of ruin so awful that it ought to curdle your blood, and of the beginnings of a rescue so magnificent that it ought to thrill your songs, even as it has many times tuned the harps and voices of the angelic choir. When I began my visitation in India I found a condition of things which no words can fully describe. I wish you could be placed on some magic carpet which should transport you to that heathenism-stricken continent. What I saw and heard went to my bones and marrow and heart, and became an awful incubus and nightmare. When I have awakened in the darkness of the night it has held me to a revival of the same awful feelings, which Bishop Thoburn could not fully represent to you because for forty years he had been in the midst of heathenism, so that he had to become calloused on the surface or die.

DEGRADATION OF WOMAN.

India is a dreadfully poverty-stricken country. Women are employed in the hardest of labor at four cents a day, and multitudes of men get no more. Excellent carpenters and masons and painters can be had in Madras, Bombay and Calcutta for from ten to fourteen cents a day. That shows the poverty. It is important that you get a little sense of what you read about and hear about, not as a distant and striking picture, but as an omnipresent reality; and this among three hundred millions of people for whom Jesus Christ died! I want you to *see* this thing. Take in your hearts the condition of women in India. Dr. R. S. Storrs utters this brilliant and very impressive truth; that as Dante recognized

his ascents in paradise not by any consciousness of upward movement but by an ever increasing brightness which he discovered in the face of Beatrice, so the world over and the ages through, the elevations of humanity are distinctly marked by the elevations of woman. Think of a country in which not only are women the great burden bearers, and in which millions of those who can get any work get only four cents a day (and there are millions who cannot get any work), but where a woman has no thought of any such thing as being the owner of her own body, of her own mind, or of her own heart! Where fathers give away their daughters in marriage to men who have never seen them, and where the bride and groom generally meet but once before their marriage for a short conversation which runs like this: "Can you cook? Will you stay at home and prepare my food?"—and on the other side, "What wages do you get, and can you support me, and will you if I marry you?" and that is about all. And this occurs, or the contract for it, when the girls are less than twelve years of age, generally from six to nine; and if a man's daughter becomes eleven or twelve and is not engaged to be married he seeks a marriage broker and says, "Find a young man for my daughter." And he gives her in marriage, and often she never sees the man to whom she is body and soul given up until they meet at the marriage altar. Then, if the man dies, she becomes a widow, sometimes at eleven or twelve years of age; and is henceforth the bond slave of her father-in-law and mother-in-law, and is despised and has no hope of happiness in this life.

"SACRED BENARES."

Now another picture, showing how the general mind of this whole mass of humanity has been for thousands of years depressed; until the intellect, sensibilities, moral nature and spiritual aspirations are covered up, and ground down, and loaded with rubbish and filth, and corrupted at their very foundations.

Come with me to Benares. It stands on a fine sweep of the River Ganges and extends for two miles and a quarter. There is a high bluff sloping back from the river, and all along these "sacred" waters of the Ganges facilities are provided for bathing for religious purposes. Here are stone steps going down into the water and there are platforms reaching out thirty feet or more

into the stream, in order to make possible the simultaneous bathing of the largest number of men and women. It is done promiscuously, but decently. They manage while in the water to strip off what little clothing they have, and then to robe themselves with the new garment before coming out. As I went up and down that river front on the second story of a kind of house-boat, for two or three hours one morning, and saw tens of thousands of people bathe for religious purposes in the "holy Ganges," my great and profound sense of the evils of heathenism was stirred and it went into my bones and marrow and heart as never before. Most of them seemed utterly indifferent; they looked about and went through it as mechanically as though turning the crank of a hand organ. There were among them lepers, to be known by their white spots. The Ganges is the filthiest stream I ever saw; the Missouri after a freshet cannot match it. The dead bodies of wild animals float down, lodge on the bars, and are torn to pieces by the vultures. The calcined bones of human beings burned in the Ghats float down the stream; and there is a Ghat in constant use on the shore in the midst of the bathing places. And there is the sewerage of the great towns and cities, and of the whole country which is full of domestic animals and wild beasts and human beings; crowded, three hundred millions of people, into a territory one-third the size of the United States. And that is the Ganges; yet they think it is perfectly "sacred" and clean. They bring their bowls of brass consecrated by the priests and dip up the water and drink it for internal ablution. They carry home water to their friends, a pint of this holy water as a sacred treasure. No statements of physiologists as to the unknown myriads of microbes in every gill affect them in the least. It is the "holy Ganges;" it is "sacred." As I came to the shore and went into the shrines, of which there are a great many thousands, with little gods in them, and the people came and laid down their yellow flowers or other offerings, and, as I went through the temples of which there are hundreds, the instruments of devotion and the symbols in the presence of these gods in every case were so obscene that no photograph of them could lie on your parlor table, and no words can mention them. And this is universal. Do you wonder that as I came away on the train it seemed to me as though I myself was going down into those filthy waters and being submerged and suffocated and yet reaching after pearls!

A HEATHEN MELA.

Two weeks later while attending one of our conferences—the Northwest India Conference—at Allahabad, I had the opportunity to visit one of the great heathen melas. A mela is any festival—generally a religious festival—and we have wisely adopted the word for our camp meetings. This heathen mela is fixed at Allahabad for certain weeks of January and February every year; and tens of thousands of pilgrims (sometimes as many as ninety or a hundred thousand in a single day), from anywhere within fifty or a hundred miles, come with their blankets and with a little food, to bathe at the confluence of the Ganges and the Jumna Rivers, the most “sacred” place in all India, believing that to bathe in those waters gives better promise of release from sin than anything else of which they know. Numberless thousands, I suppose ten or twenty thousand, gather in a few hours. Between the great bluff on which the city is situated and the junction of these rivers there is a vast stretch of sand, a mile and a quarter in width, traversed by sprinkled paths. On both sides of the broad avenue are many hundreds of beggars, the most filthy and disgusting you can conceive of, exposing every manner of physical deformities, nine-tenths of which are simulated, and among them scores—I think there were a hundred or more—of especially “holy men,” as they call the fakirs. One I saw who had his left foot securely planted above his right knee, and held there for years. His penance was to be twelve years standing on his right foot, with a little board under his breast and a cord attached to that and fastened to a post behind him, supporting one-third of his weight. He was esteemed especially holy because for eleven years he had not had his left foot on the ground. Another had one arm extended perpendicularly until it had grown as stiff as iron—could not by any possibility be brought down. Others were buried in dust so that nothing but the nose and mouth protruded; and every expiration of the breath blew a cloud of dust into the air. There were several on beds of spikes. One had been on his spike bed for five years; another for more than six; another for nine; twelve being the maximum penance.

Dr. Goucher, who was with me, is a great collector; somehow he is a sort of magnet to which things come. He came back from

one of those beds of spikes with two of the spikes. He had tried to get the man lying on them to sell him some, but the answer was that he could not possibly do that. "Well," said the doctor, "let me take some;" and catching the gleam of a silver coin in the doctor's hands the devotee turned his head the other way while the doctor took some and gave him the coin. The spikes are three inches in length, sharpened at both ends, driven into the board about an inch, and on several hundred such spikes the poor fellows lie until their callous backs and legs become somewhat accustomed to them; but it is a matter of twelve years, or else the penance is a failure. I still have one of the spikes. Do you think I can put into words the impressions with which I left that place (after some hours of wandering about) concerning the disgusting and ruinous heathenism in which hundreds of millions of my fellow-creatures are held in India? Beside the great pathway was a little booth in which four or five native preachers, two of whom understood English, were preaching the gospel; and I stopped and found one who could interpret for me. Presently there came up an old man; a little crowd gathered; he heard with them the singing, and then the plain preaching, and he put now and then a question which the missionary would pause to answer. When the talking stopped and there came a little lull I had a half-hour's chat with the old man through an interpreter. He had one of his sacred books wrapped up carefully, which he unwrapped and showed me, and read me something from it; and then he put it aside awhile. I noticed that while he was talking to me his hand was moving busily all the time in a little bag—a prayer-bag hung by a hook to his girdle, and with a place for his thumb on one side and the fingers on the other. I asked him what he was doing. "Why, I am counting off my beads—saying my prayers." Said I, "You don't want them; let me have them." He smiled and said, "They don't do me any good." So presently he handed me over the string of beads and I gave him half a rupee of silver and told him I would be glad if he would take that and I would take his treasure; and he said it was no longer of any use to him. I pointed him to Jesus; and he listened to me and tried to upset me by quotations from his book; and then listened and listened and wanted to know more of my Master; and when my time was up and I arose to leave, and he gave me his

hand, he said, "I will be *your* disciple." "O," I said, "I don't want you; I will turn you over to my Lord, Jesus Christ;" and I came on my way.

MISSIONARY SUCCESSES.

I would not have drawn these dark pictures, if there were no light to be had on them. Let me now address myself to the condition and progress of the Christian religion, and especially the Methodist type of it, in the British Empire in India. I wish first to make a general statement—a very brief one—and then to impress it upon your minds by a few vivid pictures. The collective judgment I have formed is this:—that Christianity, and the Methodist type of it, in India, have brought forth in this generation a volume of Christian evidences of greater value to the world than all the volumes of Christian evidences that can be gathered from the libraries of the theological seminaries of both hemispheres; that in our time, in the lifetime of the younger men here before me now, the Christian religion has so taken hold in the vast empire of India, among three hundred millions of people, as almost to enable the careful observer to see the very footprints of the ever-living Christ all over that land; and I shall hardly exaggerate my sense of the truth on this subject if I should add that, if the too laggard church could but come a little nearer to her divine-human Leader, his fresh footprints would be seen everywhere among the nations.

The difference between the books and the sight of such evidences of Christianity as I have had the privilege to witness in the recent months is all the difference between reading a treatise on the expansive power of steam and walking the deck of a magnificent six thousand ton steamer plunging through the billows in the midst of the ocean, and feeling the constant throb of its hot heart, until in twelve days it has crossed the great Pacific. I find not how, in any words which I have been able to frame with tongue or pen, to make any statement strong enough to voice my own burning conviction that the Lord Jesus Christ is taking India. Call to mind, if you please, Judson in Burma, toiling, praying, fearing, hoping for many a weary year before he had a single convert, and Maclay similarly waiting in China; and then hear the facts which I am about to state; that only forty years ago, under appointment

and advice of those two great missionary leaders of the church, John P. Durbin and Matthew Simpson, William Butler went out to plant Methodism in India: and then consider well what I now tell you;—I wish these figures might be burned into your memory—that we now have in India and Malaysia 77,963 communicants of the Methodist Episcopal Church, of whom 38,750 were baptized within two years; 1,259 schools, with 31,879 pupils; 2,485 Sunday schools, with 83,229 scholars; 209 Epworth Leagues with 10,337 members; 226 foreign missionaries, including the ministers, their wives and the missionary teachers of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society; and native laborers in various ranks of employment, making a staff of 3,537 paid workers; and that the total value of our church, school and other properties is 3,607,980 rupees.

SOLID FOUNDATIONS.

The foundations of our work in India have been broadly and solidly laid in both the great departments of missionary labor, the educational and the evangelistic. Some missionary societies devote themselves almost entirely to education, and the missionaries are little more than schoolmasters; some, almost entirely to evangelistic work. Our Church does both, and does both strongly and well; and makes the two coöperate with and reinforce each other. Some ten years ago, when that wonderful little bunch of consecrated and sagacious optimism called James M. Thoburn (just then elected to the Missionary Episcopacy) began his first tour among the churches in America before he went out to India and Malaysia, he startled the Church by saying that he hoped to live to see the day when there would be ten thousand converts under the care of our Church in India alone in a single year. We heard it with wonder—some of us raising the question whether he was the wildest of fanatics or a courageous and veritable prophet of the living God. I am thankful to say that I was one of those who at the time chose the latter horn of this dilemma. The events of the last ten years have abundantly justified that belief, and instead of ten thousand there have been twelve thousand, thirteen thousand, one year eighteen thousand converts in a single year, brought to Christian baptism under the labors of our missionaries in India and Malaysia! And these numbers might be vastly augmented if only—

as one of our native pastors said in my hearing—we could provide “holders up” of the converts, that is, plain, comparatively illiterate but genuinely converted pastor teachers, who should train them in Christian knowledge and guard them against the temptations sure to assail them.

NAINI TAL.

Let me show you another picture. After only four days in Bombay, by a **slow** three days’ journey on cars where you have to provide your own bed, bedding and towels, I reached a beautiful spot among the mountains,—itself six thousand feet above the level of the sea,—Naini Tal, which means the “Lake of the Goddess Naini.” It is a wonderful lake: I know of nothing in this country to suggest it, unless it be Lake Mohonk. Naini Tal is twice as green and ten times as big, and is surrounded by mountains fifteen hundred feet in height, on whose steep sides, embowered in the greenest foliage, are seen the elegant, palatial homes of summer residents and English officials, and sanitariums for missionaries, and Christian schools and churches. From one of the near heights I got my first glimpse of “The Snows,”—as they call them all over India,—a very diminutive name for the snow-clad Himalaya Mountains; and there I saw, one night before sunset, and the next morning at sunrise, sixty-three peaks, the highest of them twenty-five thousand seven hundred feet in height and the lowest twenty thousand feet. As the setting sun withdrew its rays from them, one after another, they seemed to withdraw themselves almost, and to turn into sullen heaps of gray ashes, as darkness quickly covered them; but out of it, the next morning, at break of day, they rose before my eyes in glorious resurrection and majestic state. It was a sight never to be described nor forgotten. But when I came down from that vision,—which can never be equalled for me in this world,—I had a still profounder impression. I had just seen on a slope of the Himalayas the glacier from which one of the fountains of the Ganges bursts forth. I then saw at Naini Tal a grander sight, the spot where William Butler stood in God’s name when he smote the rock of heathenism, and lo! India Methodism!—and the rill had become a river. For four days I was there, watching its wondrous flow, at a District Conference, in which were included an Epworth League meeting, a temperance meeting,

and various other meetings. Some fifty native teachers and local preachers and stewards and class leaders were present; and also—and I cannot mention it without a quick heart-throb—one of the teachers of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society,—Miss Budden of Pithoragarh, with her forty-nine girls and women—native Christians, brought to Jesus largely by her instrumentality, whom she had led nine days' march over the rough mountain paths, twelve miles each day, carrying on their heads their tents and their food and their blankets,—twenty-five pounds on the head of every woman, ten pounds on the head of every girl,—nine days' march to be with us four days in the corner of our humble little church, and listen and wait, and wait and listen, and sing and get blessings from God, as they did in rich abundance; and nine days back over rough mountains and along weary marches to their work again. That was my first strong impression of the river flowing in India; but I stood on its banks in many other places, later on.

A CAMP-MEETING IN INDIA.

A short time after, with the Rev. Dr. Goucher, who was my constant attendant and helper in all this visitation, and with Bishop Thoburn, I spent four days at the Hathras camp-meeting in Northern India. At the railroad station we found a line of our native Christians and of our children from the schools, with a few of our American missionaries at the head of the line, drawn up on each side of the path, a third of a mile in length, to receive us with a band of native music, with the sound of firecrackers and other explosives, and with lofty songs; because we came as the representatives of the great mother Church, which had made possible to them the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. I cannot describe the scenes of those four days, as under the spreading banyan trees we joined these people in their religious services. We tried to get at the questions whether the converts were converted, and whether this was really Christianity that we saw, and the genuine Methodist type of it. In our daily attendance of the meetings we had interpreters sitting beside us to keep us posted. On the Sabbath morning several of the recent converts were baptized. There was among them an old gray-haired man who for many

years had been a fakir, but had forsaken his idolatry, and was sitting at the feet of Jesus. When I was about to administer the rite of holy baptism to him, after he had been closely questioned by Bishop Thoburn, the old man, as his last break from idolatry, took off his rosary and cast it down at my feet as though to say, "My heathenism is at an end; tell my friends in America that my only trust is in the precious blood of the Lamb." I prize this fine rosary, not only because of its intrinsic value, but because of its associations with the religious superstition of its pagan owner almost from his boyhood.

"RAW HEATHEN."

Look now at one more picture, which I saw in the immediate vicinity of a little village called Bahlaj, where two years and a half before we had only fifteen converts, the overflow from Bombay; and that shows you how missions propagate themselves; you can't keep them behind fences. We had a field assigned us in Northern India—you might as well assign limits to the rising tide of the Atlantic Ocean as to assign a narrow field to James M. Thoburn and his fellow missionaries and the Methodist Church anywhere on the face of the earth. John Wesley told an everlasting truth concerning it when he said, "The world is my parish." Well, pardon the Pauline digression! Fifteen of these Gujerati converts from Bombay got up into the region of Baroda; of course our missionaries followed them; and in two and a half years they had become fourteen hundred. I wish we had such success as that all over the United States. The missionaries extemporized a little camp meeting under the banyan trees for Dr. Goucher, Bishop Thoburn and myself to meet these converts; we went there and found them gathered from scores of little villages. When I speak of villages, I do not mean what you call a village here; I mean simply a little collection of mud huts—perhaps ten, twenty, fifty, one hundred of them—in which human beings live and from which they go forth to their daily toil in the fields. In villages of that sort, within twenty miles, these fourteen hundred Christians lived; and twelve hundred of them got out to see the American strangers; and they had a morning and afternoon of holy song and delightful addresses and the utterance of Christian experiences and exhortation; and then in the afternoon, as we

drew near the close of the services, Dr. Goucher and I had the honor and the pleasure to baptize two hundred and twenty-five persons, mostly recent converts, including twenty-five or thirty children of those converts, many of them four or five years old, running around the grounds clad in nothing except the brown silk in which they were born. Bishop Thoburn strictly questioned all the adults before we baptized them. They were arranged in rows, sitting on the ground, and they were closely questioned somewhat thus: "Do you believe in one God?" "Do you believe in Jesus Christ?" "Do you forsake your idols—have you put away every token of idolatry?" "Will you forsake" this and that and the other? "Will you give up especially *Ghali*?" which is the Hindustanee word for the obscene abuse of your mother and your grandmother. They do not swear; their swearing is the obscene abuse of each other's ancestors, and especially female ancestors. "Will you break away from all that and every other wicked thing?" And when they had answered many such searching questions I said to one of the missionaries: "Do these poor fellows and these poor women know anything about the Apostles' Creed?" He took the question forward and said, "Our American bishop wants to know whether you know anything about the Apostles' Creed;" and then said to the interpreter, "Ask them and let them try it;" and then those adults repeated the Apostles' Creed from beginning to end better than I have often heard it repeated in America, unless it was read from the book; and could have done the same with the Twenty-third Psalm, the Ten Commandments, and the Lord's Prayer. "Raw heathen," I have heard said of these people in Europe and in America. "Raw heathen." Yes, such they were; such *they were*. How, then, did they come to know these things? Because for four or six months pastor teachers, converted men knowing almost nothing but Jesus Christ, went through these villages every evening when the laborers came home from the fields and held village prayer services, in which the New Testament was read and plainly expounded, and the Apostles' Creed was taught, and the Lord's Prayer was taught, and the Ten Commandments were taught; so that I say although they had all been "raw heathen," when we visited them they were penitent Christian believers. I said to Dr. Parker, one of our most experienced and trusted presiding elders (when I had given him a full account of

this scene), "Dr. Parker, tell me frankly, when you thus win twenty, or one hundred, or two hundred of these raw heathen and baptize them, how many are steadfast after a few years?" He answered: "We have done that again and again; and where they are properly cared for by their pastors, after a year or two years you will find ninety-five per cent of them every time with their faces toward the cross, leading good lives and doing their best to break away from their habitual sins." "Raw heathen?" God send us more of them, and send us the grace to strengthen and uphold them, and to present them at last before Him with exceeding joy.

THE WOMAN'S FOREIGN MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

The work of this society, which is of high importance in all our foreign missions, is absolutely indispensable in a land like India where, to so large an extent, only women can be the saviors of women. About one-half of the entire work of this society is in India and Malaysia. No wonder that the simple, awful, continent-large facts concerning the deep degradation of women in India, concerning the unimaginable ignorance and the nameless horrors of the harem and of the zenana, concerning child-marriages, which are often contracted between the ages of six and ten years, and sometimes even in infancy, concerning millions of child widows, multitudes of whom were only betrothed but now never can be married and are doomed as the bond slaves of their fathers-in-law and their mothers-in-law to lives without one ray of hope, have effectually taken hold of the heart and conscience of that sex which constitutes three-fifths of the membership of the Christian Church, and whose representatives were the intensest lovers of the Divine Man, "last at the cross, and earliest at the grave."

It is not always possible to trace a great idea or organization back to its real genesis; yet, doubtless, such a genesis is like that of this globe, "without form and void," until God says, "Let there be light." The Woman's Foreign Missionary Society of our Church certainly had its origin in the need of India as that need was apprehended in the sagacious minds and consecrated hearts of Dr. and Mrs. William Butler and Dr. and Mrs. E. W. Parker.

The founding of an orphanage was one of the first enterprises of Methodist missions in India. In November, 1858, when Dr.

and Mrs. Butler had been in that country only two years, they took in one weak little girl, blind in one eye. Within two years more they had received thirteen orphans. Then, when the British government was instituting means for the temporary care of famine orphans, Dr. Butler, foreseeing the lives of shame to which such waifs were doomed, proposed the bold project of providing for one hundred and fifty girls and one hundred boys, while as yet he had no means for their shelter or support. They were quickly set down at his door in 1860 in bullock-cart loads of fifteen or twenty each, most of them half starved, and fifteen of them too far gone to be saved. This greatly enlarged work began in Lucknow, but was removed in 1862 to Bareilly, to a site hallowed by the blood of Maria Boist, a Eurasian, the first Methodist martyr in India. When the mutiny broke out her flight was intercepted by a soldier, who cut off her head. Her body was buried under a rose tree in the garden, and there stands our Orphanage, her fitting monument,—one of the largest and most successful institutions of its kind under our care in any land. When I visited it in November, 1897, it was caring for 351 children, of whom 150 were “famine waifs”; and thirty-two of such died of starvation after they were received, being too far gone to be nourished by any kind of food. At the Conference in Bareilly the following January I had the great pleasure of assisting in the baptism of 123 little children of this Orphanage, nearly all of whom were one year before in the jaws of famine and of heathenism.

I inspected the arrangements of this Orphanage with care, and with the highest satisfaction. It seems to me to present a preëminent illustration of that “sanctified common-sense” which characterizes in a good degree the work of the Woman’s Foreign Missionary Society alike in its home activities of inspiration, money-raising and supervision; and in its diversified foreign enterprises of rescue, conversion, education, training and general uplift, as I have studied them in Mexico, Europe, Japan, India and Malaysia. Its arrangements are studiously adapted to prepare the girls for life, as they will have to meet its problems; and the cheap, plain, one-story buildings in which they live, while furnishing the very best sanitary arrangements and vastly greater comfort than the homes from which most of the children have come, will not unfit them for those to which many of them will return. I saw the girls sitting on

the floor grinding the wheat, working little stone mills two by two, such as were in use when the Saviour said, "Two women shall be grinding at the mill"; mixing and baking their *chapatis*, cooking the rice, and doing almost all the work which girls and women can do in the Orphanage.

One of the surest and readiest tests of the real character of any movement may be found in its reflex effect on its promoters. While in India, I observed with care the workers in the field, the spirit they manifested, the service they rendered; and I must now say I was able to add, with clear conviction, many names to my Eleventh of Hebrews, my personal roster of the saints and heroes of the faith. One of these, whom I feel free to mention, because she has since gone to receive her crown, was Saint Phœbe, sur-named Rowe. Her father was an English gentleman, and her mother a Hindu. She was early converted, and came to Miss Isabella Thoburn's school in Lucknow; where, before she was twenty years of age, all the girls were converted through her untiring efforts. She was then thrust forth into a really unique career as a soul-saver. For twenty-five years she went everywhere in Northern India as a flaming torch. She was unequalled in the versatility of her work as a teacher, school superintendent, assistant missionary, zenana worker, deaconess and evangelist. In this last-named work she was preëminent; her track was a constant triumph. She went from village to village visiting heathen fairs, speaking from the steps of temples; she gathered the people in huts, under trees, by the wayside, in city streets, anywhere,—and with amazing persuasiveness told the "glad tidings." Multitudes were converted, and "she probably did more than any other one person in India to lift up the common, village Christian in religious living."

I had seen her and heard her pathetic singing in America, and hoped to meet her at the Hathras camp meeting, and at the Northwest India Conference; but she sent her affectionate greetings, with the message that she could not forsake her much loved work. On April 13, the very day I reached my home, she was welcomed to her eternal home, where, if there "is joy over one sinner that repenteth," there must surely have been high festival that day on the arrival of a winner of so many souls.

Of course, I observed the work of the Woman's Foreign Mis-

sionary Society in many other places of which I cannot now speak. One other illustration must suffice. We had a red-letter day far away in South India.

A GREAT "TAMASHA."

In Madras, the first morning, before we got through our *chota haziri* or little breakfast (just simply a cup of tea and two very little bits of toast served before we got out of bed in the morning), a saintly lady who is in charge of our Woman's Foreign Missionary work in that city sent us word that we must surely come over at 11 o'clock and see some of the work of her teachers. There, in the humble missionary home in which she lives, we saw forty dusky little maidens of the higher castes of that city, sent at good prices for tuition to this school, because it is the best school to be found in Madras. Those little maidens were dressed in the finest silks that India could produce; and jewels—they had jewels in the tops of their ears and in the bottoms of their ears; they had them in their noses; they had them on all the joints of their fingers and even on their thumbs, on their wrists and on their elbows and on their ankles and on their toes, so that they fairly jingled with jewels whenever they stirred; and they stirred a great deal, because they went through some very striking calisthenics and some very lively singing. Beside these, and somewhat younger, were perhaps twenty little girls without a jewel, in the plainest clothing—waifs of society, picked up by saints of the living God, out of the dust of heathenism and out of the deepest poverty—trained in the orphanage and brought to the knowledge of the blessed Christ. There was also there that wonderful personage whose biography I wish every Christian before me might read, and that it might be in every Sunday-school library and in every family in the United States—Sooboonagam Ammal—a high caste woman, with all her privileges and wealth of jewelry three years ago, taught of Jesus in the zenana until she wanted to come to him; but how could she break away, and have her *death* celebrated by her friends (as it was celebrated afterwards)? But two years ago she came to Miss Stephens, cast herself down at her feet, and said, "I am God's Christmas gift to you;" and from that hour she broke utterly away from all her old connections. I saw her again and again,

with no jewels, going forth daily into the zenana, and to the scrubbing of floors and the humblest of work—a true, noble, consecrated saint—bound to get to the bottom of society, and if she can, also to the top of it, and to be a faithful missionary among her own people.

I saw also a zenana woman who, until that day, had never seen the face of a white man—had seen no man's face near at hand excepting the face of her husband and son and of the servants about her house; but having been converted some years ago, in a quiet way in the zenana, and having learned to love Jesus, she at last persuaded her husband (having laid by all her jewels) to let her come to that house, and see the little children, and hear them sing, and see these American strangers. She had holes in her ears almost as big as a copper cent—the lower lobe being as large as the upper, to hang large jewels there to please the eyes of her husband and her son. She sat there hardly daring to cast her eyes around; and yet she gathered courage, and when the meeting went on, and was almost over, with sweet voice she sang "All the way along it is Jesus." The next day we laid the corner stone of the new orphanage which Miss Stephens is building. And now let me tell you a strange fact. The great pavilion in which we met, which would cover two thousand people, was adorned with beautiful tapestries and hangings; flags were suspended along the main street of the city a half-mile each way, and lights at night along the same street for the same distance; great bamboo towers were built, fifty feet high, hung around in the evening with hundreds of lights: and all this was done by a native heathen gentleman, because he had come to believe that this school work which these blessed Christian women are doing is philanthropic and excellent work. This high government officer, this solid merchant and man of wealth, did all this with a cheerful heart, as a kind of unconscious testimony on his own part to the way in which the kings of the world and the wealth of the world (when Isaiah's splendid visions are fulfilled) are to be brought and laid at Jesus' feet. One-third of the pavilion was shut off by a curtain, behind which were three hundred zenana women who, until that day, had never been out into the world and seen the faces of white men; and we noticed, as the exercises of speech and song went on that the bamboo curtain was raised six inches, and long rows of brilliant eyes were peering out and keen ears were listening; and when the service ended, our

benefactor, Mr. P. Vencatachellum, who had done all this work of preparation, including ample refreshments, leaving Miss Stephens nothing in the way of expense that day except to pay for the corner stone itself, took us there to that curtain and introduced us to his wife, who shrank and drew back as though from pollution, and yet did touch the white man's hand, as did a few others of the women there. We saw the bright-eyed, saintly Sooboonagam Ammal moving around among them, getting the frowns of some and the indifferent greeting of others, and the wondering looks of many. They knew what she had left; and only a few months before had had a great public meeting for the reprehension of the rich woman who could break her caste and leave her friends and have her funeral publicly celebrated by them before she died. In response to a letter from Mrs. E. B. Stevens, Corresponding Secretary of the Baltimore Branch of the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society, thanking him for his generous aid on this occasion, Mr. P. Vencatachellum wrote as follows: "I am much pleased to find that the little assistance I have been in position to render to the good work Miss Grace Stephens is carrying on in Madras among my fellow countrywomen, has been so highly appreciated by you; and it is extremely gratifying to find that the noble work is so heartily followed up with your good wishes and prayers and efforts. I shall always be glad to hear of the success of the zenana and orphanage work of your mission and trust that my countrymen and countrywomen will gratefully avail themselves of the benefits of education, both temporal and spiritual, thus brought within their reach by such God-fearing and self-denying agents as Miss Grace Stephens and her earnest co-laborers." O, my friends! do not such facts open a rift into darkest India?

MAGNIFICENT OPPORTUNITIES.

Now let me add, if only our beloved Church were able (nay, we are *able*), were so awake as to be *willing* to lay such gifts on the altar of the Foreign Missionary Society, that we might add twenty-five per cent only for the work in India next year, and as much the year after, I tell you my sober conviction (which is as clear as anything which I have profoundly studied and about which I know the facts), we might double the number of our communicants and pupils, and our influence for good, in India, in forty-eight months;

and in the early years of the century to come, if the dear Lord shall only give us reserved energies of the Holy Spirit, for which my praying heart often lays claim in humble faith—in the opening years of the coming century I see nothing to prevent a million converts in India in a decade. The people are forsaking the old religious and are disgusted with them. The British Empire carries with it all around the globe the Bible, and Protestant Christianity, and the form of sound words in the English liturgy, and is a savor of good on these lines; and I, for one, am glad and grateful for this influence of the nation from which we sprang.

HOME AGAIN.

I am glad to be back again; I am glad to have rested for three weeks in flowery Japan; I am glad to say that on the last Sunday I spent in Tokio, riding six miles through a fierce rain in a little narrow jinrikisha, with two barelegged Japanese to draw me—when I got to the little church in a heavy rain I found one hundred and thirty native Japanese, and through an interpreter preached to them the simplest gospel I could command; and, having closed, I sat down; but, during the singing, said to myself, “Why hadn’t you the courage, here where the Japanese are too Frenchy and polite to put religious experience straight to men, why hadn’t you the courage to ask if anybody wanted to be a Christian?” And so, before they rose to sing the doxology, I gave a brief exhortation and invited any who wished to come to Christ to rise and stand; seven arose—five young men, some of whom are students in the Imperial University, and two middle-aged women. Then I asked them forward and they came and sat down, and I tried to tell them the simple way of faith. And, somehow or other, I felt as though my license to preach had been renewed; and I am ready to go around the globe again if only I may be God’s voice to bring seven sinners—especially seven heathen sinners—to the mercy-seat. I am very glad to be back here. “There’s no place like home;” and, next after that dear spot where your wife and children are, there is no place like a great Christian community in which you elbow up against like-minded, hearty, sympathetic fellow-workers in the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

I hope to run with you a little longer in this pilgrim path, and trust that through God’s infinite mercy we shall meet at length with our loved and lamented ones at the right hand of the Father, and cast our starry crowns at our enthroned Redeemer’s feet with immortal rapture.

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